

The Well-Dressed Woman

"Sunday Morning"

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THE BLOUSE THAT MATCHES THE SKIRT—By Anne Rittenhouse.

THE problem of what blouse to wear with the skirt is one that vexes every woman each season.

The old comfortable days when we were all inartistic and put on any waist that happened to be clean, whether or not it harmonized with our garments, has gone into the limbo of vanished days.

Even those of us who are careless and reckless about color schemes feel a little uncomfortable in a skirtwaist that shrieks at a skirt.

Custom is a powerful thing and it makes those who do not conform to it ever conscious that they are running counter to it.

So now that custom, which may be defined as an act by the majority, is against the casual skirtwaist, the world is trying to conform to it.

The separate skirtwaist is the kind of puzzle that in trying to explain gets everyone more mixed up than before. No matter what rule you lay down, you would have to take exceptions to it in another week. There is a separate skirtwaist which is fashion, and yet the dictate of fashion is never to wear a separate skirtwaist. When one uses the latter phrase it implies a colored skirtwaist which has nothing in common with the skirt that is worn with it.

White blouses, for instance, are at the top of style and every woman needs a half dozen of them and yet a white blouse with any colored skirt is not correct for any affair after 5 o'clock in the evening.

For luncheon they are worn by the very smartest women and yet two hours later at a reception from 4 to 6 a woman who wore a white blouse would never remove her coat. If she is nervously taking tea with another friend the white waist is entirely in good

form.

It is not necessary that the blouse of the same color as the skirt be of the same fabric, yet when the fabric is thinner than cloth the waist should match. This is because few fabrics except cloth are made up into winter coat suits.

In discussing all the different kinds of bodices, blouses and shirtwaists to be worn this season, it is not possible to lay light and fast rules, but a general idea can be given of what fashionable women consider correct, and all those who wish may follow.

A clever man once said that the reason for desiring earnestly to be dressed like everyone else was to keep from being conspicuous. I think that is a far-reaching explanation of a nice woman's viewpoint.

When it is not considered correct to wear a violet cloth skirt and a pale blue silk blouse as an entire costume to an afternoon affair, why do it? It only draws attention to one's taste.

To begin in the beginning, white blouses are immensely in demand. Half the fashionable women in the country are busy making them instead of fancy work for all lectures to the contrary. It is usually the fashionable women who know most of the domestic arts. To-day it is fashionable to be able to sew, to trim hats, to cut and fit, and to do all manner of the hand work, and so whenever you go you will see women and girls making beautiful blouses.

These are worn over elaborate corset

covers or white silk slips. The color underlip is worn, but it is not in first style. It finds its chiefest use when part of a whole lining.

And right here is a reason for the expert and beautiful work put on the modern white blouse. This garment serves with a plain, thin white skirt as a dressy house gown for all kinds of affairs. Plain skirts are so much in fashion from the ball gown to the morning street suit that these separate white skirts can be easily made at home to go with an elaborate blouse. One girl has two such skirts, both of sheer materials, made by plain five-gored pattern tucked or plaited at the hips then finished with three wide tucks above wide hem. These are ready at a moment's notice to go over a colored slip with the white blouse that possibly she has worn all the afternoon, and added to a high-collared giraffe makes a fetching costume.

It is probably a good rule to go by that nothing but transparent fabrics should be used for white blouses. Given a flourent muslin is better than a heavy gingham. The thick, mannish shirtwaists have been dead for some time.

Good lace or none should be used in their making. This does not mean expensive lace. At the bargain counters, at the remnant sales, the wise woman can pick up dozens of yards of wearable lovely lace at a small price. Tulle can be used for certain kinds of muslin, but Cluny, Valenciennes and dotted footings are the best choices. Pieces of all-over Valenciennes should be picked whenever possible for they can be used for the round or pointed chemise and deep cuffs that are included in so many of the best blouses.

Handwork is preferred, but there are many women who have neither the time, skill nor money to indulge in it.

The latter is only necessary when one must have this work done out. The price one pays for it seems abnormal considering how easily women who know how to do it at home.

At the great shops and dressmakers fine white blouses sell from \$5 to \$15, and last week I saw two for a debutante at \$25 apiece. Unlined lingerie blouses, if you please. It is true the work on them was unequalled. They had been specially made in Paris, but one was paying for the duty, the rent of the American shop and probably the electric light bill of the Frenchman who sold it to the American buyer.

These prices, however, are like Arabian Nights a tale to the average woman, and I am only repeating them to show you what is done in this country of millionaires.

I also repeat the prices to emphasize how fashionable and important the hand-made lingerie blouse is. All the fashionable ones are still fastened down the back. If a woman wants to make hers at home by a simple pattern she will certainly like the following model.—Tiny tucks from shoulder to top of high belt, back and front, the tucks running

to a sharp point at the very center. Along their lower edge, following the lines of the point, fasten a narrow band of insertion, cut out the fabric from beneath it and neatly hem the edges.

Put sleeves in fine tucks from armhole to a point below elbow, then finish with four bands of insertion divided by narrow strip of fabric and finished four inches above wrist with two narrow ruffles of edging.

If one prefers a sleeve the full length, put in a tight cuff of all-over lace, finished with a ruffle of edging.

Another simple design is to have a star-shaped yoke quite narrow with all-over lace and the tucks mounted to this. They are prettier when only about three inches long. They must be exceedingly fine, or they will give a bulk of material at the belt that will be unsightly.

The sleeves of these have three-inch long tucks at armhole and below elbow and are finished with a turnover cuff or straight band of the all-over lace and a ruffle. Some times edge of yoke and stock and cuffs is finished with a mercedized soutache braid. There is quite

a practice of putting an exceedingly fine braid on lace for all manner of blouses.

Another design which is especially becoming to a short-waisted figure, where yokes must be avoided, has tiny tucks from shoulder to bust and three panels of embroidery down back and front, the edges finished with a quarter-inch frill of Vol or Cluny lace. The sleeves have tucks from wrist to elbow. If one wants long sleeves, and three panels of the embroidery edged with lace from shoulder to elbow.

Another elegant design is a fine hand-kerchief linen or organdy with tiny tucks at shoulder back and front, the long ones at back. Down center of back and front is a three-inch panel of heavy cotton net on which are applied heavy designs of embroidery which are cut out from a piece of insertion or all-over embroidery.

The edges of these panels are finished with two tiny frills of coffee-bean pattern in Valenciennes lace.

The sleeves have five-inch tight cuffs of net and embroidery, are fastened with tiny pearl buttons and edged with a frill of lace. The stock matches the cuff.

Still another design has the jewel and vine design in embroidery, done in mercedized floss down front at each side of a hem-stitched box plait, which is edged with fine lace.

The turnover cuff and stock also have the embroidery design, and are finished with lace.

It would be impossible to detail with any good results in print the designs of these extra elaborate blouses with their scrolls and twists and turns of wonderful handwork and exquisite narrow laces. It is fashionable to use two and three laces on one of these blouses, and a favored combination is Irish, Cluny, and Valenciennes.

I have never been able to see the economy of these white blouses for wage-earning women. One hears so much of the neat office or shop girl being advised to wear white shirtwaists and short cloth skirts. This costume is really a luxury for the woman who spends her days in dusty surroundings and has no chance to change her waist.

It is an extravagant form of dress. The girl at a counter, at a typewriter, at an office desk, can't wear a white blouse an entire day without its being soiled at night.

To be fresh and neat, she wants a blouse a week, which means twelve in all. Then there is the laundry. If she lives at home, she hasn't the heart to impose so much washing on the one person who does it, and if she pays for it, it eats up a large slice of her salary.

For the girl who works, nothing is better or neater than two or three simple blouse suits of mohair or woolen crepe or tannin. Over these she can wear a top coat in the street.

If she has a coat suit already for business wear, let her get blouse to harmonize with the skirt, making them of pongee, veiling, china silk, heavy linen or any durable odds and ends of thin materials that match or accord with her suit.

She can spend her laundry money in turnover cuffs and collars of white linen. Suppose her suit is brown or a mixed green covered or a plaid in which blue dominates, then let her get blouse for day wear of these colors and keep her pretty white ones for church and for any occasion when she wants a dainty blouse under her coat suit. And let her get a white cloth or mohair skirt for constant evening wear and for any social occasion a thin white shirt made with tucks and a deep hem.

Reading from right to left, these gowns are:

First—Blouse suit of pale gray velvet with circular skirt cut in two parts. Blouse trimmed with deep veal of lace and small bands of cloth of silver. Cuffs and collar are of deep gray velvet, and the belt of pale gray silk.

Second—Couture of dull green broadcloth, with short-waisted skirt. This is trimmed with straps stitched from shoulder to belt, and belt, revers and cuffs of light green suede.

Third—Jacket suit of plaid tweed, skirt trimmed with bias folds of chambray cloth covered with lattice work of tulle. Jacket is trimmed with plain and embroidered chambray cloth. Made single-breasted.

Fourth—Princess gown of plum-colored broadcloth, with elaborate short jacket of cloth and Irish lace. The novelty is the kid buckle at back of jacket and the arrangement of the sleeves.